

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

GOLD PEARL RECORDS, LLC,

Plaintiff,

v.

Civil Case No. 23-10151
Honorable Linda V. Parker

CITY SKETCHES, INC., et al.,

Defendants.

/

OPINION AND ORDER GRANTING MOTION TO WITHDRAW

Pending before the Court is a motion to withdraw filed by Ari W. Lehman, counsel in this matter for Defendants. (ECF No. 51.) The stated basis for the motion is a deterioration of the attorney-client relationship. Defense counsel represents that the Defendants have received a copy of the motion. The Court held a telephonic case management status conference on today's date. Counsel for both parties were present at the conference. Defendant Robert Garfield Baldwin was noticed to attend the status conference, but he did not appear. (ECF No. 52.)

The Court finds good cause for defense counsel to withdraw and that such withdrawal can be accomplished without material adverse effect on the Defendants' interests. *See* Mich. R. Prof'l Conduct 1.16. The Court is staying the proceedings for 30 days to allow the Defendants to retain new counsel. As explained in the Court's prior order (*see* ECF No. 8), as a corporate entity, City

Sketches, Inc. cannot proceed in this matter without an attorney. *See, e.g.*, *Rowland v. California Men's Colony*, 506 U.S. 194, 201-202 (1993) (citing cases); *Doherty v. American Motors Corp.*, 728 F.2d 334, 340 (6th Cir.1984) (citations omitted). When a corporation declines to hire counsel to represent it, the court may properly **dismiss its claims**, if it is a plaintiff, **or strike its defenses**, if it is a defendant. *Greater Southeast Cnty. Hosp. Found., Inc. v. Potter*, 586 F.3d 1, 5 (D.C. Cir. 2009) (citing *Donovan v. Road Rangers Country Junction, Inc.*, 736 F.2d 1004, 1005 (5th Cir. 1984) and *Strong Delivery Ministry Ass 'n v. Bd. of Appeals of Cook Cnty.*, 543 F.2d 32, 33 (7th Cir. 1976)).

Accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED that the motion to withdraw (ECF No. 51) is **GRANTED** and Ari W. Lehman shall be terminated as counsel. Defendants' counsel shall serve a copy of this Opinion and Order on the Defendants and must file a proof of service with the Court.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this matter is **STAYED** for 30 days to allow Defendants to retain new counsel, who shall file a written appearance on the docket before the stay expires.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Defendants' failure to retain counsel and for counsel to enter a written appearance within 30 days of this Opinion and Order will result in City Sketches, Inc.'s defenses and counterclaims being stricken

without further notice of the Court, and the Court will conduct further proceedings in its absence in accordance with the law.

s/ Linda V. Parker
LINDA V. PARKER
U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE

Dated: December 17, 2024